# Pentagon's collaboration with AI developers signals new military dynamics



Leading software developers in artificial intelligence (AI), including OpenAI, Anthropic, and Meta, are navigating a complex relationship with the United States military, aiming to improve the efficiency of the Pentagon's operations while ensuring that their AI technologies do not lead to lethal outcomes. In a recent conversation with TechCrunch, Dr. Radha Plumb, the Pentagon's Chief Digital and AI Officer, highlighted the essential role that AI plays in enhancing the Department of Defense's (DoD) capabilities in identifying, tracking, and assessing threats.

Dr. Plumb stated, “We obviously are increasing the ways in which we can speed up the execution of kill chain so that our commanders can respond in the right time to protect our forces.” The term "kill chain" describes the military's method for identifying and neutralising threats, which involves an intricate network of sensors, platforms, and weaponry. According to Dr. Plumb, generative AI has proved beneficial during the early phases of this process, including planning and strategizing.

The evolving dynamics between the Pentagon and leading AI companies mark a significant shift. In 2024, OpenAI, Anthropic, and Meta revised their usage policies to permit U.S. intelligence and defence agencies to utilise their AI systems, although none allow their technologies to cause harm to humans. Dr. Plumb elaborated on the Pentagon's stance, saying, “We’ve been really clear on what we will and won’t use their technologies for.” This clarity has led to a flurry of partnerships between tech firms and defence contractors, indicating a growing collaboration.

Notable collaborations have emerged, including Meta working alongside Lockheed Martin and Booz Allen in November 2024 and Anthropic’s partnership with Palantir during the same month. OpenAI followed suit with a similar agreement with Anduril in December, while Cohere has also been integrating its models with Palantir. The increasing use of generative AI within the Pentagon has the potential to influence Silicon Valley's stance on military applications, possibly leading to a relaxation of existing usage policies.

Generative AI appears particularly useful for simulating various scenarios in military operations, as Dr. Plumb remarked, “Playing through different scenarios is something that generative AI can be helpful with.” This capability allows military leaders to explore diverse response strategies and assess potential trade-offs in the face of multiple threats.

Despite the burgeoning collaboration, the precise technology being employed by the Pentagon remains somewhat ambiguous. There is a concern that leveraging generative AI within the kill chain may breach the usage policies of several leading AI developers, including Anthropic. In a statement directed towards TechCrunch, Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, reflecting on the implications of military partnerships, noted, “The position that we should never use AI in defense and intelligence settings doesn’t make sense to me... We’re trying to seek the middle ground, to do things responsibly.”

The discourse surrounding AI and its role in military operations has raised ethical questions, particularly regarding autonomous weapons capable of making life-and-death decisions. Palmer Luckey, CEO of Anduril, commented on the longstanding practice of the U.S. military in acquiring autonomous weapon systems, suggesting a nuanced understanding of existing regulations. However, Dr. Plumb firmly opposed the notion of fully autonomous weapons operating without human intervention, stating, “As a matter of both reliability and ethics, we’ll always have humans involved in the decision to employ force.”

This ongoing debate highlights the ambiguous nature of "autonomy" in technology, further complicating discussions surrounding AI’s role in military contexts. Dr. Plumb reframed the conversation by emphasizing that, rather than independent decision-making, the use of AI systems in the Pentagon is conceived as a collaborative effort between humans and machines throughout operational processes.

Moreover, sentiments around military engagements in technology sectors have varied significantly. In the past, the tech community has witnessed significant protests, as seen with Amazon and Google employees opposing military contracts related to Project Nimbus. However, reactions regarding AI's integration into military frameworks have been relatively subdued. Some experts, including Anthropic researcher Evan Hubinger, have suggested that the dialogue and collaboration with government entities are vital for effectively addressing the risks associated with AI.

In conclusion, as the Pentagon continues to incorporate AI technologies into its operations, it stands at the crossroads of innovation and ethical considerations, shaping the future of how military and artificial intelligence intersect.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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* <https://techcrunch.com/2025/01/19/the-pentagon-says-ai-is-speeding-up-its-kill-chain/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data